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Identical letters dated 30 August 2016 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I write further to our previous letters addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council concerning the continued refusal of the Secretariat to address, in its regular monthly briefing to the Security Council on the situation in the Middle East, the ongoing Israeli occupation of the Syrian Golan, or the fact that Israel, the occupying Power, continues its hostile practices and violations. The most recent such briefing was given by Mr. Nickolay Mladenov, the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, on 29 August 2016. In that connection, and on instructions from my Government, I should like to draw your attention to the following:

- At the aforementioned briefing, Mr. Mladenov simply said that "the situation in the Golan remains volatile and continues to undermine the 1974 Disengagement of Forces Agreement. Fighting between the Syrian armed forces and armed groups in the areas of separation and limitation continue, with several incidents across the ceasefire line reported." Those remarks are unacceptable and demonstrate flagrant disregard of the situation in the occupied Syrian Golan. They are also an unwarranted transgression by the Secretariat of its mandate, because certain expressions in the statement contradict United Nations resolutions and positions. For example, reference was made to "the Golan" instead of "the occupied Syrian Golan". Also, the expression "armed groups" was used, although United Nations reports refer to some of those groups as "armed terrorist groups". Furthermore, it was not mentioned that Israel directly supports such groups, something that has been confirmed by numerous United Nations reports.

- The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic vehemently objects to and deplores the failure yet again of Mr. Mladenov, at the aforementioned briefing, to address the situation in the occupied Syrian Golan. He also failed to highlight the position of the United Nations on the Israeli occupation of the Syrian Golan as set forth in the relevant United Nations resolutions, notably Security Council resolution 497 (1981). He furthermore failed to address continuing Israeli violations and illegal practices in the occupied Syrian Golan, even though those issues are at the heart of the item that was under discussion and are an integral part of his mandate as the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process.

- Syria reaffirms that the item on the situation in the Middle East has, as is well-known, historically addressed ways to enforce United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolutions, on ending the Israeli occupation of Arab territories, including the occupied Syrian Golan, and the withdrawal of Israel from those territories to the June 1967 borders, as well as resolutions on ending Israeli violations of humanitarian law, human rights law and other international instruments, in order to achieve comprehensive peace and justice in the region in accordance with the recognized terms of reference.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic therefore calls on the Secretariat to ensure that its future monthly briefings on the situation in the Middle East address the situation in the occupied Syrian Golan and implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions, particularly resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 497 (1981).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative